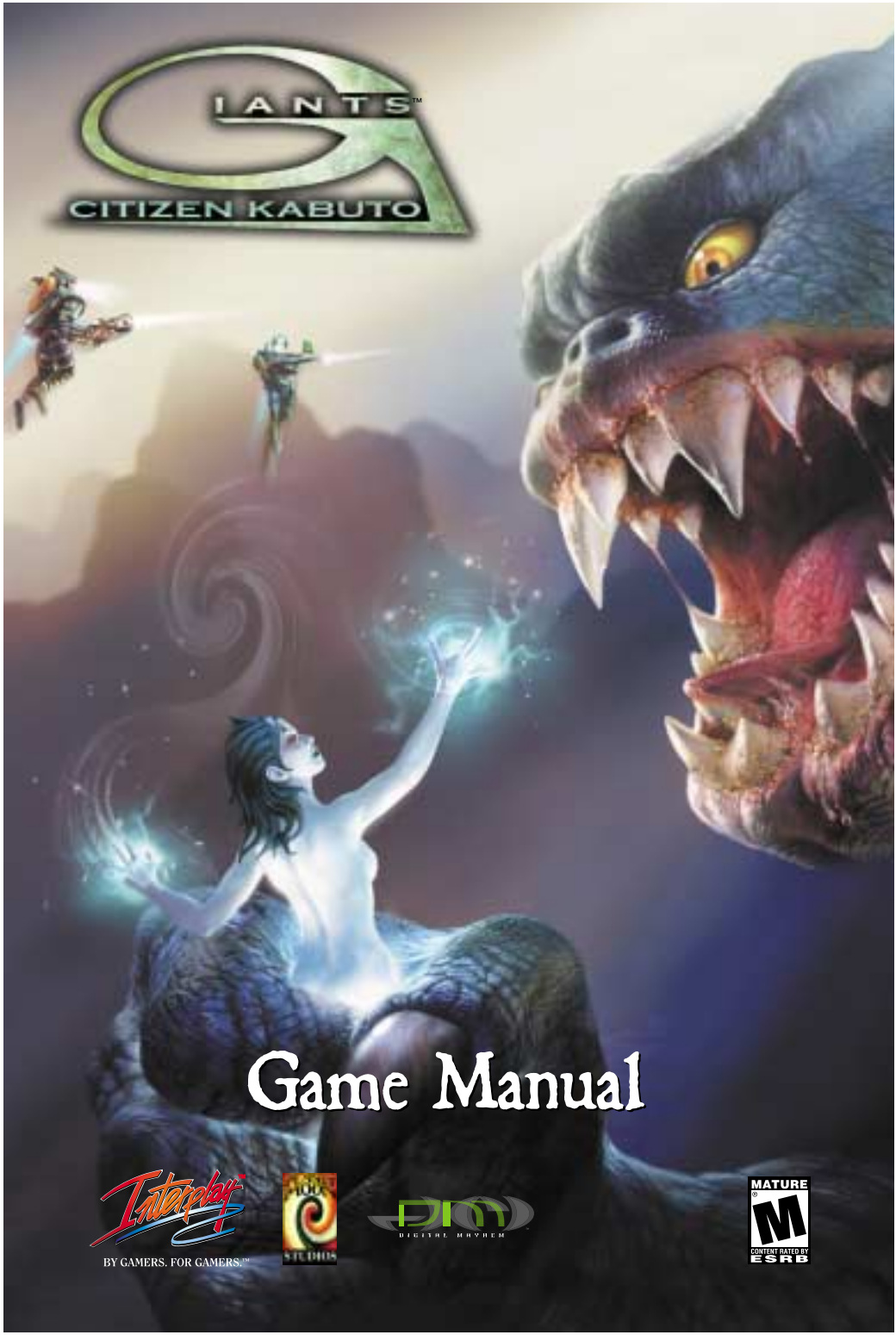
GIANTS™
CITIZEN KABUTO
Game Manual
Interplay
BY GAMERS. FOR GAMERS.™
PLANET MOON STUDIOS
DM
DIGITAL MAYHEM
MATURE
M
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

Giants™:
Citizen Kabuto

GAME MANUAL

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Background Story

Before man climbed down from the trees to shop in megastores and drink cappuccino, before Earth wadded itself into a cool blue ball, before PLANET MOON even existed, there was the Island. The Island, a massive fragment of a long-lost planet, hurtling blindly through space. The description evokes the term, “asteroid”, but the Island is no dead piece of scorched rock. Even from a distance of light years, the Island’s radiant colors distinguish it as an anomaly within the void of the cosmos. True asteroids, decaying and splintered pieces of rock floating quietly around the Island like watchful ghosts, radiate jealousy from their black pores, desperate for the beauty they will never have.

The surface of the Island is mostly water … if it can be called water. So rich and bright, so vast. Various land formations can be found within the Island’s great sea – small continents composed of stone or ice. These landmasses boast curious shapes, some curving gently, some jagged. Seen from the sky, the scattered islands resemble the alphabet of a lost deity, perhaps writing his name upon the surface of a world. Or making a shopping list with whatever materials were at hand. Or doing his taxes.

Anyway, the Island … whether these small continents are made of rock or ice, they boast some curious life forms. Plants ranging from a few inches in height to thousands of feet. Small humanoid creatures occupying quaint stone huts. A variety of monstrosities, all created by the Island’s natural forces … all but one.

Upon the surface of this paradise wanders the giant, Kabuto. He knows that this is his home, but he does not feel that he belongs. From whence he came, he does not know, only the serial number “001” imprinted on his stomach offers any clue. The only one of his kind, Kabuto sits alone and longs for company. Every creature he has encountered was … different. Whether they came from the skies or from the seas, they tried to destroy him. Now, Kabuto trusts no one, and guards the one thing that he loves – the Island, his home.

Little does Kabuto know that the Island was home to others before him. In the oceans, there dwells a race of females called the Sea Reapers. These women, along with their many minions, once ruled the Island with strong will and harsh law. In their pride, they created Kabuto, as a defense against intruders. But Kabuto became conscious of himself, his loneliness, his pain – and he went berserk. The Sea Reapers' creation turned on them, decimating their numbers and driving them into the seas. In time, a wicked new leader arose to lead the survivors: Sappho, the Sea Reaper Queen. Sappho intends to return the Reapers to their rightful position on the Island, as the dominant species, by whatever means necessary. Her daughter, Delphi, isn't so sure of her mother's evil practices. By far the youngest and most innocent of the Reapers, Delphi is just learning the mystical powers known to the others. If only she knew of some alternative to evil … if only she could speak with someone from the universe outside the Island …

Perhaps five cockney space aliens on holiday aren't the outsiders Delphi had in mind, but what can you do, eh? Baz, Tel, Reg, Gordon, and Bennett – otherwise known as the Meccaryns (Meccs for short). After leaving their home planet for an annual lads' holiday at the one and only Planet Majorca, their ship is almost immediately attacked and swallowed by the notorious Giant "Gibbon" Fish. Hurtling through space within the belly of the great ship, all the boys could do was get drunk and wait. After two months, the Meccs' ship was ignominiously "discharged" from the bowels of the great beast. Sobering quickly, the Meccs piloted their battered ship towards the nearest chunk of rock for repairs. If you haven't guessed already, they ended up at the Island.

Faced with yet another unscheduled layover while restoring their ship, the Meccs decide to make the best of their temporary home. They're used to harsh conditions, so they explore with the aid of suits and weapons developed through superior technology, scouting the strange world of the Island for signs of life. Just their luck – the natives are already embroiled in their own little war, and the Mecc visitors are most unwelcome!

Meccaryns … Sea Reapers … Kabuto … One island isn't big enough for the three of them.

PLAYER ID

When starting Giants you will need to create a new Player ID (or select a previously created one). The Player ID will store all your key configurations, statistics, and level load status. Feel free to create multiple Player ID's – one for each of the voices in your head, if you like. You can also delete old or unused Player IDs.

MAIN MENU

Having created (or selected) a Player ID, you'll come to the main menu screen, offering a number of options: Start New Single Player Game, Join Multiplayer Game, Host Multiplayer Game, Options, Load Single Player Game, Change Player ID, and Exit Game. Use the mouse or arrow keys to move the selection/highlight cursor – use the Enter key or left-mouse button to select an option. While navigating through game menus, you can press the Escape key to return to the previous menu screen.

Start New Single Player Game

Selecting this option will start a new single player game. The single player game takes place over a number of glorious islands, with multiple missions upon each. You will control each of the three races – Meccs, Sea Reapers, and Kabuto – for different portions of the single player game. Your progress through the islands is automatically saved out when you complete each mission. If you die during the completion of a mission, you'll be given the option to replay the mission. All previously completed missions can be accessed through the "Load Game" menu.

We recommend that you play the single player game first before tackling multiplayer. The progression of missions in the single player game gives you excellent training on the abilities and strategies of all three races – helpful stuff for an intense multiplayer session.

Load Single Player Game

The load game screen lists all of the missions you have completed with the selected Player ID, along with a score rating beside them. You can access this screen to start the last mission you played or return to a previous mission in order to improve your score.

Host or Join Multiplayer Game

Selecting these game options will allow you to host a new multiplayer session or join an existing multiplayer session. For more information about setting up and playing multiplayer Giants games, see the section starting on page 66.

OPTIONS

Controls

This menu selection will let you access the controls options screen. You can separately change the key configurations for Meccs, Delphi, and Kabuto (you can find the default control configurations on the card included in the Giants game box). When you're in any of these screens, you can change button/keyboard assignments by placing the mouse cursor over the function that you want to re-assign, then hitting the key/button that you wish to perform that function in the game.

Graphics Options

Graphics options will often affect the performance of your game. Turning off special options, lowering the model detail, and decreasing the view distance can all yield better game performance – at the cost of some of the prettier stuff in the game. If you are experiencing poor game performance, you should try changing the graphics settings below until you find the balance of speed and visual quality that suits you best. Depending on your video card, some of these options may not be available.

Model Detail (high/medium/low): Three levels affect the detail of all game models.

Lighting (on/off): This option turns lighting on and off – note that when lighting is off, the game does not become dark, but becomes uniformly bright.

Object Bumpmapping (on/off): With this option, you can apply or remove object bump maps in the game – bump maps give surfaces the appearance of roughness or depth.

Landscape Bumpmapping (on/off): With this option, you can determine whether or not to display landscape bump maps in the game.

Environmental Mapping (on/off): This option turns environmental mapping on or off – environmental maps are used to create shiny or reflective surfaces.

Enhanced Water Effects (on/off): With this option, you can choose to turn super-special water effects on or off.

Player Shadow (on/off): This option turns the player character's shadow on and off.

General Shadows (on/off): Through this option, you can turn all game shadows on or off.

Sun Flare Effect (on/off): This option will apply or remove the sun flare effect in the game.

View Distance (slider bar): Using the slider bar in this option will increase or reduce the viewing distance. A certain amount of "fog" will always obscure distant objects in the game – adjusting the view distance slider will bring the "fog" closer or push it further away.

Sound Options

Depending on your sound card, some of these options may not be available.

Sound Effects Volume (slider bar): Lets you change the volume at which game sound effects are played.

Music Volume (slider bar): Lets you change the volume at which game music is played.

Reverb (on/off): Adds or removes reverberation effects to game sounds.

Occlusion (on/off): When occlusion is turned on, objects and terrain will affect how sound travels.

CHANGE PLAYER ID

This option lets you change your player ID. Different player ID's progress separately through the single player game, and save out different control, audio, and video settings.

EXIT GAME

Selecting this option allows you to exit the game. Go ahead, you quitter.

Cast of Characters

MECCARYNS

Five cockney space aliens: Baz, Tel, Reg, Gordon, and Bennett – otherwise known as the Meccaryns (Meccs for short). On their way to a holiday at the infamous Planet Majorca, the Meccs are swallowed by a giant space fish and defecated into the vicinity of the Island. Nursing a broken ship and massive hangovers, the Meccs limp towards the strangely beautiful world, where they find a most violent welcoming party. Forced to remain on the island while repairing their ship, the Meccs have the advantage of teamwork and superior technology when dealing with unfriendlies. Their goal: to get their ship up to top speed and take a well-deserved vacation at Planet Majorca. If they have to kill everything on the Island in order to accomplish that goal, well then …

Baz

Baz (short for "Basil") is the leader of the group, the most intelligent of the lot and, consequently always frustrated by the ineptitude of his mates. That said, he loves his mates like brothers and will do anything to protect them. Like the rest of the group, Baz loves a pint. Unlike the others, however, he insists on finishing the job at hand before thinking about the fun he's missing.

Reg

Reg is the technical maestro of the group. He's polite, even to the point of being timid. But when he gets pissed off, you'll know it. Reg is also the womanizer of the bunch – more than anything, he wants to get to Planet Majorca as soon as possible for a few libidinous delights with the beautiful Majorcan ladies.

Tel

In his grating cockney voice, Tel often complains that he's unjustly branded as the complainer of the group. Of course, the irony of this situation escapes him.

Gordon and Bennett

Gordon and Bennett love their beer, love their women, and love their holiday destination: Planet Majorca. They rarely think beyond those three things. These two fellows are rather dense, but in a lovable way (even when they engage in psuedo-intellectual conversations and argue the night away). Gordon and Bennett always seem to be together, inevitably causing trouble.

SEA REAPERS

Exotic female creatures complete with crimson eyes and skin of a soft bluish tint, the Sea Reapers were the dominant life form of the island for long ages. They lorded over all other Island life with absolute power bordering on the tyrannical. In an effort to discourage any unwanted visitors from approaching their bucolic home, the Sea Reapers created Kabuto, a massive giant creature with brutish tendencies. Unfortunately for the Reapers, Kabuto was too well-suited to his purpose. He not only defended the Island against any intruders, he chased the Sea Reapers into the surrounding oceans. Adapting to their new home, the Sea Reapers developed mystical powers – from lightning-fast attacks with sword and bow to elemental spells on a grand scale.

Delphi

Delphi is the youngest and most innocent of the Sea Reapers, as well as the daughter of Queen Sappho. Delphi doesn't always agree with the other Reapers' severe methods, but she doesn't know of any alternative. She is certain, however, that she must put an end to her mother's evil reign. When the single player game introduces Delphi,

she is just growing into her powers, hoping to refine and increase her abilities with the help of her famed tutor, Yan, the Samurai Smartie!

KABUTO

You don't know how you came to exist upon this beautiful Island, nor do you know of any other creatures like yourself. Stomping around in existential frustration, you only know two things for sure: you are very big and you're mad as hell.

Created by the Sea Reapers to defend the Island, Kabuto went a little berserk and chased all the Reapers into the ocean. Standing over ten times the height of a normal person, Kabuto is a truly massive brute, capable of swallowing opponents whole or destroying entire villages with his prodigious posterior. As Yan the Samurai Smartie says, "When big Kabuto ass drop from sky, run like your nuts are on fire."

While playing a 900-ton monstrosity of bone and muscle may seem appealing, there is one problem. When the Sea Reapers made Kabuto, they gave him a single fatal flaw – a weak spot in his tough skin, located directly in the center of his gut.

Offspring

Kabuto offspring are much smaller versions of the big cheese. When Kabuto eats enough Smarties, he can lay an egg that hatches into one of his offspring. Kabuto can then give his offspring simple commands, such as attack/eat, fetch, and return. Offspring start fairly small, but can grow to almost half of Kabuto's height if they are fed enough Vimp meat.

OTHER CHARACTERS

Smarties

Smarties are the hardy, indigenous little people who inhabit the island. For the most part timid creatures, Smarties can be extremely helpful when joined to your cause. In the single-player game, Smarties will guide you through the details of game play, give you your mission objectives, and help you build a base (when applicable). In the multiplayer game, Smarties are used mainly for base building.

For Sea Reapers and Meccs, Smarties are one of the primary resources needed to build a base. Smarties will not only raise structures, they will also develop new weapons for the Reapers and Meccs (available in the Gift Shop). But in order for your Smarties to be productive, you first need to keep them happy. Protect them, feed them, and offer them a pub where they can get plastered.

Kabuto uses Smarties in a slightly different manner. Rather than nurture and care for these mischievous scamps, Kabuto simply eats them. When Kabuto devours a few Smarties, the creatures are transformed into a viable mutant egg within Kabuto's belly. At this point, Kabuto can get in touch with his feminine side, straining momentarily before giving birth to the egg. Shortly thereafter, the egg will hatch and yield a mini-Kabuto (for more about Kabuto Offspring, see page 12).

Each of the three main characters can grab and carry Smarties. When a Mecc finds a Smartie, the Smartie will climb on his back. When a Sea Reaper finds a Smartie, the Smartie will be encased in a protective bubble, which will trail behind the Reaper. Kabuto, being Kabuto, doesn't encourage volunteers. Instead, he can pick up Smarties (who usually flee as he draws near) and skewer them on his horns – this won't kill the Smartie, but it will hurt when the Smartie laughs.

There are a limited number of Smarties on any given level, single play-

er or multiplayer. Smarties are spawned one at a time from their underground hatches. If a Smartie is killed, then another will spawn from one of the available hatches. Smartie hatches are spread fairly evenly around the world – though in some cases they may be hard to reach.

Vimps

Extremely docile and not very bright, Vimps are the cattle of the island. Vimps can usually be found strolling across the idyllic plains in herds, gently grazing as they await a grisly demise. Cooked Vimp is a staple of the Smartie diet, while Kabuto prefers to gobble Vimps raw. Either way, Vimp meat restores lost energy just like a high-priced sports drink … but with bones.

Kabuto can down Vimps like fleshy nachos in order to regain health – or he can skewer them on his horns and save them for later. Meccs refrain from Vimp consumption (perhaps they're squeamish, though reports from the Smarties insist that the meat tastes just like chicken). Instead, they need Vimp meat in order to keep Smarties happy at their base. Killing Vimps will turn them into small heaps of quivering steak, which Meccs can gather and return to base. Remember: a bellyful of Vimpy goodness equals more productive Smarties. Sea Reapers need Vimps as well, but instead of collecting their meat to feed Smarties, Delphi must kill Vimps and gather their souls. She uses these souls to power the mystical mechanisms that keep her base going.

Some by-product of the island's natural energy continually replenishes the Vimp population. If you wipe out an entire herd of Vimps, more Vimp young will spring up nearby within a few minutes. These creatures grow over time – the larger they are, the more meat they yield when smashed, shot, or blown up. Thus, when encountering a herd of young Vimps, you often have to consider the value of waiting for the creatures to fatten up against the risk that an enemy will swoop in and snatch up your meat. Wait, that didn't sound right. You know what I mean.

Reaper Guards

The Guards comprise the bulk of the Reapers' assault forces. They are the bodyguards, the soldiers, the grunts. While Reaper Guards lack any magical abilities, they do possess the requisite number of limbs and coordination skills to fire a weapon. Beyond that … well, they aren't the brightest of bulbs. You'll often find groups of Reaper Guards patrolling the valleys of the Island or guarding a Reaper settlement, clutching heavy armament in their scaly fists. Reaper Guards are also likely to show up when you're building a base, making it hard for you and your Smarties to get any work done. There are many kinds of Reaper Guards, carrying different weapons and using different modes of transportation … you'll just have to stay on your toes and be ready for anything when encountering these guys, especially with the Kamikaze Reaper who sometimes makes a rare appearance!

Sonak

This great lumbering beast is the favored method of transportation for the Reaper Guards. While ponderous and none too bright, the Sonak's rigid hide makes it extremely difficult to kill. In addition to the gun turrets that the Reaper Guards often mount on the back of a Sonak, these creatures have their own natural defense mechanisms. Sonaks possess the ability to cause the ground around them to ripple and heave simply by stomping their enormous feet. A Sonak can also harm opponents with its destructive scream, projecting disorienting sound waves out of its vast maw. If these waves hit you, you'll lose your jetpack/turbo ability for a short period of time.

Charger

The Charger is an incredibly fierce territorial creature. Once it settles on a spot, it will rarely attempt to leave that spot, even if fired upon from a distance. Not that a Charger would even feel anything short of a planet colliding with its skull, the creature's skin is that tough. A Charger will attack any creature to come near its nest, roaring as it barrels down on the unsuspecting intruder. If you happen to be the unfortunate individual placed in the path of this monster's charge, you have two choices. One – you can flee like a frightened child (not that there's any dignity lost in running away from a Charger). Two – you can try to shoot the creature in its mouth as it charges, which is the only possible way to damage it, much less kill it. Of course, as you take aim, you'll have to remember that several tons of horn and muscle are approaching at a very high velocity on a collision course with your comparatively frail form. At the point of contact, if you don't simply break apart like a water balloon, you'll probably wish that you did as you fly through the air, spurting precious life fluids in all directions. And even if you do manage to fire a shot into the beast's gullet, you'll have to get out of its way quickly or get mashed to a pulp before its irresistible charge.

Rippers

With ninety percent of their body mass composed of claws and teeth, these insect-like creatures can be ferocious enemies. Rippers are often found in packs, barely visible with the majority of their bodies burrowed underground. Like many of the other creatures of the Island, Rippers serve the Sea Reapers, their sheer numbers ensuring that no unwanted visitor will set foot on the Island without some resistance. Rippers come in three sizes:

Small: Small Rippers move slowly, always remain above ground, and possess a savage biting attack. The husks that spawn small Rippers can be destroyed, cutting off their limitless supply of these immature enemies.

Medium: Medium-size Rippers are much tougher than their fetal counterparts. In this stage, the Ripper can move at medium speed above ground or underground. Additionally, medium Rippers can spit flaming orb projectiles at you while they are above ground. When a medium-size Ripper is killed, it leaves behind a glowing sphere that will restore a moderate amount of health when picked up.

Large: These are the Rippers you have to watch out for. Large Rippers are bulky, but can move fast above or below ground. They can spit a massive blue fireball over long range, hitting with the concussive force of a grenade. When a large Ripper is killed, it leaves behind a glowing sphere that will restore a significant amount of health when picked up.

Raiks

Malignant subordinates to Queen Sappho, these creatures possess the torso of a blue-skinned woman, and the lower body of a wasp. Raiks have many of the same magical abilities that Delphi does – turbo, teleport, and cloak to name a few (see the section below starting on page 44 for more information on Sea Reaper powers). Like Delphi, Raiks wield a sword and bow with great proficiency. Often found commanding a contingent of Reaper Guards, Raiks are not to be trifled with. And they have absolutely no sense of humor.

Queen Sappho

When Kabuto turned on the Sea Reapers, many were destroyed; the scattered survivors that fled to the oceans were demoralized. While the water-bound Reapers increased their mystical powers dwelling in the sea, they became increasingly embittered and angry. Sappho was easily the most powerful and most cruel of the Reapers to survive Kabuto's onslaught – it was only right that she should be the Reaper Queen. Her primary goal is to return the Sea Reapers to the dominant position on the Island. She always intended for her daughter, Delphi, to become a powerful ally in

this cause. However, Delphi has proven willful and rebellious – actions that Sappho sees as necessary to the Sea Reaper cause, Delphi brands as cruel and tyrannical. Now with the accidental entrance of these accursed "Meccaryns", Sappho finds herself forced to show them all just how cruel and tyrannical she can be.

Cleaners

Weak but incredibly voracious, these parasites dwell in vast numbers just beneath the surface of the soil. Whenever a creature dies and falls, dozens, sometimes hundreds of Cleaners will swarm upwards to devour the corpse. Meat, clothing, bone … nothing will remain of any carcass once the Cleaners have finished gorging themselves and retreated to their waiting places below.

Piranha

These aquatic creatures are a very basic mixture of teeth and fins… but mostly teeth. Piranha won't attack a Sea Reaper or Kabuto, but Smarties and Meccs are fair game once they enter the water.

Verms

Verms are ill-tempered flying creatures that will attack on sight and launch fire at you – this sort of antisocial behavior usually leads to a solitary and bitter life for the Verm, punctuated by occasional egg-laying (eggs will hatch additional Verms).

Dactyl, Lobird, and Flaks

These harmless birds can often be found circling lazily above the islands. Don't bother trying to shoot them down, unless you really have too much ammunition on your hands.

STRUCTURES

Barracks

The Barracks are the living quarters for the Reaper Guards, and they come in different sizes. Often, several Guards will guard a Barracks at once. When battle occurs near a Barracks, more Reaper Guards will pour out of the doors, armed and ready to deal with whatever threat approaches. Barracks can only replenish a certain amount of guards, but you can stop this process by destroying the structure altogether.

Bunker

A Bunker is a hollow bowl-like structure with portals on all sides. The bowl can raise off the ground and lower again – this way Reaper Guards can enter and leave the Bunker. Once inside, Guards are fairly well protected by the Bunker's shell, while still being able to fire at enemies through the portals.

Guard Tower

Guard towers can often be found looming over small villages, placed within strategic valleys to monitor any who would pass through, or perched atop high hills to give whoever stands within a view of the surrounding countryside. Reaper Guards often stand watch atop these towers, ready to rain fire down on anything that moves. Of course, if you can eliminate any guards occupying the tower, you can take advantage of its strategic positioning for your own purposes.

Turrets

Turrets often guard larger Reaper settlements, laying down heavy caliber cannon fire at any ground enemies who come within range of their sensors.

SAM Turrets

SAM (surface-to-air missile) turrets are designed to repel airborne invaders, and do not threaten intruders on the ground. These devices sweep the skies with mid-range scanners. Any flying enemy who approaches a SAM Turret will quickly receive a missile lock-on warning – from there, it gets downright ugly. Missiles fired by this turret will track you with fair accuracy, moving fast and with eerie purpose. Unless you're capable of some very fancy maneuvering, the blast from one of these missiles will almost certainly tear you in half as soon as it strikes.

Husks

Similar to barracks, husks are organic pods that house and spawn Rippers. When you're faced with a whole heap of hostile Rippers bearing down on you, husks are more than likely the root of the problem. What's more, you can probably throw all of your ammunition at the Rippers without thinning their numbers … until you get the bright idea to blast away at the husk that's spitting them out. Husks come in two sizes, small (only spawns small Rippers) and large (spawns medium and large Rippers).

Huts and Other Buildings

You'll encounter many other types of structures as you explore the Island – many designed and inhabited by the Smarties, some belonging to the Sea Reapers. For the most part, these buildings can be reduced to rubble if you apply some heavy firepower to their walls over a period of time. Of course, you might not want to destroy every building you see as a regular practice. Sometimes the cover they afford can be a great blessing when you're outnumbered.

Game Interface

Many of the interface elements in Giants are common between the races, but some portions of the interface are specific to each character.

MECC INTERFACE

Game Text

Any messages the game might have for you (such as, “I know where you live”) will be displayed in the upper portion of the screen.

Jetpack Fuel Indicator

The jetpack fuel meter, displayed in the lower left-hand corner of the screen, represents the energy level of your jetpack. Most of the missions start you off with a full jetpack. Activating the jetpack thrusters will propel you skyward, but will also consume fuel rapidly. Don’t worry, though, your fuel level will regenerate over a short period of time – just try not to fall from a mile above ground before it does. Next to the jetpack fuel meter, a small light indicates when your nitro boost is active. The nitro boost gives a little extra kick to the jetpack thrusters – when it’s used, the light will go off as you shoot upwards at greater speed. The nitro boost will immediately regenerate as soon as you touch the ground (signaled to you when the small nitro boost light becomes active again).

Backpack Indicator

Next to the jetpack fuel meter, an icon for the current backpack that you're wearing will be displayed. Many backpacks, such as the Bush camouflage or Shield, drain your jetpack fuel so long as they are active. Other backpacks, like the Turret and Pop-up Bomb, are dropped and activated one time only. Also, if you are carrying a Smartie on your back, a Smartie picture icon will be shown here.

Weapon Icons

At the bottom center of your screen, you'll see the weapons currently held in your inventory. Blue brackets surrounding the weapon icon indicate the weapon in use, while the numbers beneath each icon indicate ammunition for the weapons you possess. Mecc weapons are primarily guns of one sort or another – all except the handgun hold a limited amount of ammunition.

Health Indicator

The heart in the lower right hand corner of the screen is your health indicator. Look at the heart as a life container. When the level of red stuff inside the heart goes down, your health is getting low. When there's no more red stuff in the heart, you are dead. Just like in real life.

Vimp and Smartie Indicator

The upper left hand corner of the screen holds two sets of numbers – one corresponds to Vimps, the other to Smarties. The Vimp number is the amount of Vimp steaks you currently have in your possession. You'll need Vimp meat to feed any Smarties you have working back in your base – but you can only carry a limited amount of Vimp meat. The Smartie numbers indicate the number of Smarties you have working for you in your base compared against the total number of Smarties on the current island (in multiplayer games, a third number is displayed – the number of Smarties the enemy has). Note that the total number of Smarties on the island never changes. If a Smartie is killed, another is spawned elsewhere. The only number that you can affect is the number of Smarties that you have working for you – the more the better, so start setting up that attractive benefits package and 401k plan as soon as possible.

Targeting Cursor

The Mecc interface uses a basic targeting cursor in the center of the screen. For the majority of game play, this is displayed as a small white crosshair. The cursor can change under certain circumstances. The targeting cursor has two states, depending upon what it's placed over. The neutral state is represented by the basic crosshairs – this means that there's really nothing to shoot at directly in front of you. When there is an enemy or structure in your crosshairs, a red highlighting cursor will appear.

If you're using a homing missile, you can keep your cursor aimed at the desired target to lock the missile on – a highlighting bracket will appear to let you know when you're locked on. Once you are, fire at will.

DELPHI INTERFACE

Game Text

Same as for the Meccs, all messages for either single player or multi-player games are displayed in the upper portion of the screen.

Spell Indicator

In the lower left-hand corner of the screen, you'll see a device with five circular slots – this represents the five spells that Delphi currently possesses. You can toggle between available spells and activate them whenever you see fit. Spells may be obtained through regular game play, or acquired at a spell shop. Beneath each spell, three "lights" are displayed, indicating the number of times a spell may be cast. When a spell is acquired, all three lights are on. When that spell is cast, one of the lights goes out. If you cast the spell three times, you can return to the spell shop in order to replenish the energy for that spell.

Delphi can also use acquired Vimp souls to recharge her spells. This collected energy is represented by the vertical bar in the center of the spell icon device. By killing Vimps and collecting their blue, ghost-like souls, Delphi increases her magical energy. You can use this energy to recharge any of your spells – just press Shift and use the cursor to click on one of the 5 slots. This will take some of the Vimp soul-energy you've collected and fill up one of the three "lights" so that you can cast another spell. Vimp soul energy can also be used to restore the mystical forces that power your base.

Smartie Bubble Indicator

When you "acquire" a Smartie, he'll become encased in a bubble of magical energy that will follow you around until you return the Smartie to your base. If you have a Smartie bubble floating along behind you, an icon next to your spells will show it.

Weapons Icons

Just like the Mecc interface, your weapons are displayed at the bottom center of your screen. Blue brackets surrounding the weapon icon indicate the weapon in use, while the numbers beneath each icon indicate ammunition for the weapons you possess. Delphi always possesses a sword and bow, but can acquire other, more powerful bows in her spell shop.

Health Indicator

As with the Mecc interface, the heart in the lower right hand corner of the screen is your health indicator. The level of red contained in the heart represents your health. When the heart is completely red, you are at full health. When the heart has no red in it whatsoever, you are at zero health. Hint: Zero health is bad. Delphi will gradually regenerate health so long as she's immersed in water.

Smartie Indicator

The upper left hand corner of the screen holds a number representing Smartie allocation. This works the same way as the Mecc interface, indicating the number of Smarties you have working for you in your base compared against the total number of Smarties on the current island (again, in multiplayer, your enemy's number of Smarties is also displayed).

Targeting Cursor

While you're controlling Delphi, the targeting cursor has the same highlight function as it does when you're controlling the Meccs. In short, if you place the cursor over a viable creature or building target, a red highlight will appear. Also, if you have a certain spell selected, new crosshairs will appear if you target something that the spell can affect.

On Delphi's interface, the crosshairs are encircled by another cursor, which represents your turbo ability. When you place the cursor over a viable landmass, the turbo circle will turn green. When the crosshairs are aimed at water, sky, or land that's out of turbo range, the turbo circle is neutral gray. When you activate your turbo ability, the turbo circle will drain as you fly through the air – the distance you travel determines the amount of turbo energy you drain. Once drained, your turbo energy will gradually recharge within a few seconds. You cannot activate your turbo ability unless the turbo circle is full, though you can change direction and turbo again while in the air, provided the new destination you pick is within range. You can activate your turbo ability at any time as long as you have enough energy for the jump.

If you're using a Power-Up Bow or Lightning Bow, you can lock onto your target(s) by holding down the fire button. When you're locked on, a highlight aura will appear around the target(s), letting you know that your missiles will hit their mark once you release the fire button.

KABUTO INTERFACE

Game Text

Same as above – game text is displayed in the upper portion of the screen. Not that Kabuto is much for words anyway.

Adrenaline Indicator

Displayed in the lower left-hand corner of the screen, Kabuto's adrenaline indicator is a measure of his overall energy. Kabuto can perform special attacks that drain his adrenaline to varying degrees. Kabuto's adrenaline will regenerate, but at a rate proportional to his health. In other words, if Kabuto has low health, his adrenaline will regenerate slowly. At full health, his adrenaline will regenerate quickly.

When you hold down the adrenaline button to charge Kabuto's attacks, a second bar will appear over the adrenaline indicator, indicating how much adrenaline will be used in the upcoming attack. As you hold down the adrenaline button, this second bar will grow to take up more and more adrenaline. There are three levels of adrenaline attacks that Kabuto can perform, using either his hands or his feet. Note that if you release the adrenaline button before attacking, you won't use up any of Kabuto's adrenaline. For more information on Kabuto's adrenaline attacks, see page 54.

Next to the adrenaline indicator, there's a small light, similar to the Mecc nitro light. When this light is on, Kabuto can run in a short burst. After a light sprint, the light will go off. Kabuto will need a while to recover his wind before the light comes on again, and he's able to run once more.

Growth/Egg Indicator

In both single player and multiplayer levels, Kabuto begins play at a moderate size (roughly twice the height of your average Reaper

Guard). This is a temporary condition, easily remedied by eating Smarties. Kabuto has four growth stages, and needs to consume a number of Smarties to expand to each level. A white outline at the bottom of the screen shows you how close you are to the next stage of growth. As you eat more Smarties, this outline will begin to fill up – once it's full, Kabuto will grow larger, his attacks will be more powerful, and all will seem right with the world.

When you reach the largest level of development, the growth indicator is replaced by two egg indicators – or as Kabuto likes to call it, "planned parenthood indicators". Once Kabuto is at full size, he can eat a Smartie in order to lay an egg. This egg will hatch into an offspring – a creature much like Kabuto only smaller. When the egg hatches, the egg indicator becomes a growth indicator for the offspring. Offspring eat creatures in order to grow, much like Kabuto. Each time an offspring eats a creature, his growth indicator will fill up a little – when it's full, the offspring will grow to the next stage of development. Offspring can only grow to about half of a full-size Kabuto's height, and Kabuto can only have two offspring at any given time. When an offspring dies, the Smartie that was consumed in order to create it will reappear.

Health Indicator

As with the other races, Kabuto's health indicator is displayed in the lower right-hand corner of the screen. The level of red inside the heart corresponds directly to Kabuto's health. Kabuto's health level affects the rate at which his strength regenerates, so staying in shape is important. Kabuto can regain lost health by eating creatures.

Targeting Cursor

When you're controlling Kabuto, the cursor changes as you place it over different objects, to represent how you can interact with that object.

Controls

Giants has default control settings for each of the three main characters, but you can change these settings through the main menu. The default controls are listed on a separate card in the Giants game box – quite handy to refer to during game play.

Movement

The slope of the terrain affects basic movement. When moving uphill, you'll find that your character moves slower in proportion to the angle of the slope. The same goes for moving downhill, except in reverse (i.e. you'll move faster down a steep slope, sometimes even sliding faster than you may wish to go). These features of general movement are common to all three races, but each also has special movement modes that help them get around.

Mecc Movement

Meccs use jetpacks to propel themselves through the air. A jetpack's energy cell will only allow you to use one for a limited duration, but once drained, they replenish their energy quickly. An extra nitro boost attachment adds power to the jetpack when activated. Once used, the nitro boost replenishes as soon as you touch the ground.

When your Mecc base has a party house, your Smarties can develop a gyrocopter. This is a fairly basic flying vehicle with its own machine gun (unlimited ammo) and unlimited fuel for flying – it can be destroyed, though. When piloting a gyrocopter in a multiplayer game, your Mecc teammates can grab on to your 'copter and hitch a ride.

Meccs cannot enter the water – at all. Doing so will summon groups of Piranhas that chew through Mecc armor to the soft parts inside.

Sea Reaper Movement

Delphi can use her "turbo" ability to blur from one point to another. When her targeting cursor is placed over a landmass within a limited range, you can activate her turbo ability to leap to the selected point.

You can also use creatures as turbo destinations. Place your targeting cursor over a nearby creature – a blue highlight sphere will appear around the creature. Use your turbo ability to leap directly at the highlighted creature. When a landmass is within range, the cursor is green; when it's out of range, the cursor is gray. Notice that when you activate Delphi's turbo for long-distance jumps, the cursor will drain. This energy meter will recuperate in a short amount of time, but until it does you can't activate Delphi's turbo ability again. While Delphi is airborne during a turbo jump, she can look around and fire her bow at enemies. The turbo ability is also great for getting close to a foe for some hit-and-run sword work.

Delphi can also acquire the ability to teleport. This is a spell like many others, with a limited number of uses (for more information on Sea Reaper spells, see page 45). Delphi can move easily through the water, in normal swimming mode or fast swim mode. So long as she's in water, Delphi will regenerate health at a moderate rate. When her base is sufficiently developed, Delphi can also gain access to a one-person Reaper Ski. This vehicle has very basic controls, and can magically skim over land almost as well as it can race over water. During Reaper Ski races, you'll find pickups such as missiles and turbo boosts that you can activate during the race.

Kabuto Movement

Kabuto is the only creature who can choose to walk at a slow pace or run at a much faster pace. While running, Kabuto can initiate more devastating attacks. He can run for short distances before growing tired – it takes him a short while to recuperate enough energy in order to go for another sprint. He's been meaning to exercise more, but you know how it is … too many Vimps to slaughter, buildings to destroy.

Kabuto can also perform great bounding leaps from one place to another. Similar to Delphi's turbo ability, you can have Kabuto jump from one point to another simply by placing the targeting cursor on a nearby landmass and activating Kabuto's jumping ability. Because he has few ranged attacks, Kabuto will automatically move towards distant targets when given the command to either "attack" or "grab" those targets. Finally, Kabuto doesn't like the water. He won't go in

deep water if he can avoid it, and if he lands in deep water (through an over-eager leap, for instance), he'll tread water miserably until you direct him to leap out.

Attacking

Mecc Attacks

Mecc attacks are fairly simple – as simple as pulling the virtual trigger. Some Mecc weaponry is more indirect, requiring a different approach to attacking. For instance, the mine is an object that you place on the ground. Once dropped, you no longer control it – if an enemy goes near it, the mine will handle the rest. For more information on Mecc weapons and items, see page 34.

The Meccs excel at working as a team. While playing as a Mecc in the single player game, you'll often have one or two of your buddies at your side, referred to as "disciples". These fellows can do plenty of maneuvering and fighting on their own, but you can give them orders as well, commanding them to go to a certain location, attack a target, or simply flock to your position.

Sea Reaper Attacks

Sea Reapers have two primary methods of attack – using their sword, or using one of their bows. The sword works just as you'd expect; press the attack button to swing the sword, striking out at close-range enemies. Sea Reapers can use many different bows, available through the gift shop. Similar to Mecc guns, every bow functions differently, requiring you to take a different approach to using them. For more information on Sea Reaper bows, see page 44.

Sea Reapers also have the ability to attack on a grander scale, using their spells. Sea Reaper spells aren't all oriented towards attacking, but the ones that are can be truly devastating. For more information on Sea Reaper spells, see page 45.

Kabuto Attacks

Adhering to the traditions firmly established in classic monster movies, Kabuto's attacks fall into two basic categories: grab and destroy. Both actions are performed at close range. Note that Kabuto can go after both ground and airborne targets. He can also perform a running grab or running kick – both of which will carry him to the target much more quickly.

Once Kabuto grabs someone or something, he can do a few things with it. If it's an inanimate object, he can throw it. By breaking up existing rock formations, Kabuto will have access to a pile of handy missiles – the term "projectile weapon" takes on a whole new meaning when you're a giant beast pitching boulders at your opponents. If Kabuto grabs a creature, he can throw that creature, he can eat it (Vimps give Kabuto health; Smarties give Kabuto an offspring egg; other creatures just taste yummy), or he can "store" it on his horns by skewering the creature on the sharpened end. Skewering creatures can be extremely useful during game play. For instance, your Kabuto may be at full health when he comes upon a herd of full-grown Vimps – just Vimp-kebab them on your horns and you'll have access to quick healing if you get into combat later.

When you direct Kabuto to destroy a target, the outcome is fairly predictable. You can also charge your attacks using Kabuto's adrenaline stores – the more you charge your attacks, the more powerful they are. Whether he uses the body slam, the elbow drop, or the flying butt slam, Kabuto is truly an irresistible force on the battlefield. Note that Kabuto's attacks are not only effective in squashing creatures, he's also very good at knocking down buildings.

Once Kabuto is at full size and can create offspring, he can direct his offspring to attack or fetch a target. This not only keeps the big guy safely out of harm's way, it gives the little ones a chance to play adult for a while.

Views

Zoom

The zoom function makes it easy to discern far-off objects on the sprawling landscape. All races can use the zoom function, but it's especially useful to the Meccs and Sea Reapers, as it aids you in firing projectile weapons at far-off targets. You can adjust the power of zoom magnification, giving you different levels of zooming in and out. You can also move freely while in zoom mode – just be careful that you don't strafe off a cliff.

Change Camera View

At any time during game play, you can change from a third-person camera view (default) to first-person view. If you're used to playing a lot of first-person shooters, you may be more comfortable in first-person camera mode. Additionally, you have the option to switch to a head-on camera to highlight your actions. This camera view isn't terribly practical for game play – if you walk forward, for instance, you can't see where you're going. However, this camera gives you a great view of your character's actions (especially fun to watch Kabuto crush, stomp, and gobble his foes from this perspective).

Additionally, while playing Kabuto, you can change to a foot cam (ground-level perspective just beneath him) or a mouth cam (a view of the action from within the big guy's toothy maw). When playing Kabuto in mouth cam mode, you can easily target objects and devour them messily. If you ever wondered what it would be like to look through a small camera inside your mouth while gobbling jelly-filled candies … you're pretty sick. Rather than taking the time to grab creatures and pop them in his mouth, while in this mode, Kabuto will lunge downward at the targeted creature teeth-first. Note that you can't perform any actions other than movement and eating (using the left mouse button) while in mouth cam viewing mode.

Map Mode

Toggling the map mode will give you an overhead view of the island, with your position in the center of the screen and a text window at the bottom with your mission briefing (single player only). A cute little face indicates your character, with an arrow representing the direction that you're facing. You can use the mouse and movement keys to move your character around the landscape while on the map screen – but be careful! If you encounter any hostile critters, they won't hesitate to pummel your character while you blissfully examine the terrain from a bird's eye view.

You can change your view of the landscape using simple controls. Hold the Ctrl key in and a mouse cursor will appear. You can move this cursor to any spot on the map and right-click to zoom in. Perhaps the most important feature of the map screen is the icon indicating the location of your mission objective. In the map screen mode, look for the small circular highlight icon. This icon marks the spot where you want to go. This is very handy if you're uncertain whether or not you're going in the right direction or you get turned around during some heavy combat.

MECC WEAPONS, PACKS, AND ITEMS

Being more technologically oriented than the other races, the Meccs rely primarily on guns, bombs, and other nifty little devices in order to get the job done. Much of the deadly equipment they use is stowed aboard their vacation ship, which might make one wonder exactly what sort of holiday they're headed for. At any given time, Meccs can carry 3 weapons (in addition to their handgun), 3 items, and 1 backpack.

Mecc Weapons

Handgun (default)

The generic Mecc pistol, affectionately referred to as the "Pea Shooter", has a decent rate of fire, but little power behind it. The only real benefit to this gun is its unlimited ammunition. In short, great for hunting Vimps and better than your bare hands when messing with anything else.

RPG

This weapon fires a rocket-propelled grenade in a straight line very fast. Any questions?

Machine Gun

The machine gun's key selling feature lies in its ability to deliver lots of bullets in a short period of time. The weapon's incredible rate of fire, however, reduces the accuracy of projectiles over a long range. Taking into account the muzzle velocity and… Look, just get as close to your enemy as you can, pull the trigger, and enjoy!

Proximity Missile

Based on the design of the RPG, this weapon uses a similar mechanism to fire a projectile that's roughly the same as the RPG rocket. The big difference being that the proximity missile will explode when it comes within 50 feet of its target. The proximity missile is a great choice when you're trying to take down any hard-to-hit enemy – especially if the enemy is airborne.

Sniper Gun

A favorite weapon for long-range combat, the sniper gun fires a bullet at extremely high velocity directly at the target. Even when fired at very long range, the sniper bullet will achieve a near-instantaneous hit, doing a lot of damage. A steady Mecc can take out all kinds of opponents with a sniper gun and plenty of ammo – but long reload times for this weapon can leave you with your pants down once too often.

Missile Launcher

Very similar to the RPG, this weapon fires an explosive projectile in a straight line towards the target. The explosive missile, however, will do more damage over a wider area than the RPG projectile.

Homing Missile

Yet another modification of the RPG, this weapon fires a missile that will actually change course to track your target. To fire a homing missile, just keep the crosshairs on your target for 3 seconds with the fire button pressed – this gives the missile enough time to lock on. Release the button when ready, and let technology work for you.

Millennium Mortar

If you have some … other shortcomings, then the millennium mortar is the perfect way to overcompensate for them. It is the big gun. Fire the millennium mortar by aiming at a spot on the ground, at a structure, or at a

living target – the gun won't fire if your crosshairs are lined up with the sky. Pull the trigger and the weapon will lob a large projectile at the point you indicated. This projectile will detonate on impact when it strikes a building or creature, but will sit momentarily if it hits bare ground, exploding after a few seconds. And oh, the explosion. Amidst the chaos of battle, enjoy a moment of contentment as you observe the mighty fireworks display. Just make sure you're far away before you do so.

Mecc Packs

Note that different backpacks have different weights – added weight will make your jetpack work harder to get you up off the ground, which means that you won't be able to go as high. Most of the backpacks are relatively light – the jetpack upgrade doesn't add any weight at all. However, the Deployable Turrets are somewhat heavy – you'll notice the difference – and the Pop-Up Bomb is downright massive. Carrying a Smartie on your back will add to the weight that your jetpack has to work against.

Jetpack (default)

Aside from one of the single player missions, your Meccs will always carry a jetpack. This device makes moving around the rough terrain of the island much easier than going on foot – it's basically a small propulsion system that will thrust you skyward with each burst. The jetpack has a limited amount of energy, but its energy will recharge over time. Thus, you can remain airborne with a jetpack so long as it has energy. Once it's gone, you'll start falling while the jetpack slowly replenishes its energy stores. Most jetpacks have a nitro boost add-on. When activated, the nitro will give your jetpack thruster an extra kick, launching you farther and faster. The nitro boost regenerates when you touch the ground.

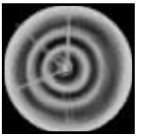
Jetpack Upgrade

The upgraded jetpack is exactly what you'd expect – an improved version of the original. It's better, faster, stronger, more powerful … order now and we'll include a special set of vibrating attachments that massage tired muscles as you fly. Wait … the attachments are shaped like what? Oh … never mind.

Repair Pack

This pack uses your jetpack energy to repair buildings, your teammates, even yourself. Pretty much useful all-around.

Shield Pack



The shield pack uses your jetpack energy to create an invisible shield around you. When your jetpack energy reaches zero, the shield deactivates.

Bush Pack

This pack uses jetpack energy to create a camouflage bush around you. When surrounded by this bush, you can walk (though more slowly than normal), but you can't fly or attack. A stationary bush is completely invisible to the enemy – moving around will increase your chance of detection. Note: Enemy Meccs hiding in bush camouflage can be seen clearly through the green viewing window of the sniper gun.

Deployable Turret

When this pack is activated, you can drop a machine-gun turret at your feet. This turret will fire on any enemy who comes near, though it can be destroyed.

Pop-Up Bomb

The pop-up bomb is the most powerful bomb in the Mecc arsenal. Larger than a grenade but smaller than a nuclear weapon, the pop-up bomb is capable of doing massive damage to a collection of structures or group of creatures. While carrying this device around on your back, you'll have some difficulty getting airborne due to the thing's immense weight – it's darn heavy.

MECC ITEMS

Mine

Once you drop this mine it'll burrow into the ground leaving only its top showing. If any enemy comes within range it will pursue them, blowing up upon impact or within 5 seconds of activation (whichever comes first).

Health Syringe

You can use a health syringe at any time to replenish some of your health.

Grenade

Activating a grenade, you'll promptly lob the explosive at the point indicated by your targeting cursor (within a limited distance). After a few seconds, the grenade will explode. Whee! Grenades work well while flying – you can drop them on enemies below while cackling maniacally.

Flare

If alerted that a homing missile is locked on to you, you can jettison a flare to confuse the approaching missile while you make your getaway.

Mecc Disciples

You and your Meccaryn buddies travel together, drink together, woo women together – it's only natural that you fight together too. During the single-player game, you'll find that your Mecc buddies – referred to as disciples – are only too ready to take your orders when it comes to adventure and battle. Your disciples can use their jetpacks to fly to locations, carry guns just like you, and have a true love for kicking ass. Your disciples will follow your orders to attack, go to positions that you point out, or return to you.

Mecc Gyrocopter

Meccs can gain access to a gyrocopter once they haul a Smartie out of their party house to build a gyrocopter pad. One Mecc can pilot the gyrocopter, while teammates (in multiplayer games) can latch on to the sides and hitch a ride. Gyrocopters not only have greater airborne range than jetpacks (due to their unlimited fuel capacity), they also have a nose-mounted machine gun with unlimited ammunition, as well as 3 millennium bombs. Millennium bombs are similar in effect to the Millennium Mortar (described on page ##). You can aim these bombs by targeting a spot on the ground within a limited range. When you land on your gyropad, you'll load up on millennium bombs again. Millennium bomb icons are displayed at the bottom of the game interface.

With all of this firepower, gyrocopters are unfortunately weak on the structural side. While you're piloting a gyrocopter, the heart-shaped health indicator on your interface refers to the gyrocopter's health, not yours. If the 'copter takes damage, you can return to your gyrocopter pad to repair the vehicle. Don't wait too long, though – it doesn't take much to blow up a gyrocopter, damaging the pilot and any unlucky teammates who happen to be hitching a ride.

MECC BASE

When building a Mecc base from scratch, you'll start with a "pit" (with a "meat drop-off" circle in front) and a "Smartie drop-off" circle. The pit is where you bring Vimp meat that you've collected – Smarties that work for you will go to the pit immediately after a task is done for some good old Vimp-burgers. The Smartie drop-off circle is where you need to bring any Smarties you gather. You can only carry one Smartie on your back at a time, and when you do, you'll want to bring him here. Once you've returned a Smartie to your base, you'll get the following:

Pub

When you get a Smartie back to your base, the first thing he'll build is a pub – hey, priorities, right? Built on top of the pit, the pub is a place for your subordinate Smarties to eat and drink in between tasks you give them. So long as you keep your Smarties well-fed, they'll sit in the pub and wait for you to assign them additional work.

Build Base Platform

After the pub, your number one Smartie will go and create a build base platform. When you stand on this platform, the camera will zoom out to an overhead view of your base – this is the base building screen. For a complete rundown of options on the base building screen, see page 58. Whenever you need to access this screen, hop on the build base platform.

Now, as you acquire more Smarties and enough Vimp meat to keep them happy, you can use the base building screen to construct the following:

Workshop/Generator

After you've gathered a few Smarties to your base, the workshop the first structure that you can create in the base building screen. The workshop allows your Smarties to develop materials needed to create walls around your base as well as cool devices for your inventory and other buildings. Once the workshop is built, you can build walls around your base as well as a gift shop.

The generator is an upgraded version of the workshop. Once you have a generator, all of your base's structures will have an additional shield added on to their health (represented by the gray bar next to each

structure in the base building view). You need to have a generator in order to upgrade your pub to a party house.

Wood Wall/Stone Wall

You can only start building walls once you have a workshop. Once you do, you can access the base building screen to place walls on four sides of your base to defend against land-bound foes. The first level of wall is made of wood; the upgrade is made of stone, giving you much tougher defenses. You need all four walls to be made of stone before you can upgrade your pub to a party house.

Gift Shop 1/Gift Shop 2

Once you have a workshop, you can direct your Smarties to build a gift shop 1. The gift shop is where you can acquire nifty guns, packs, and other items. Also, visiting the gift shop will fully restore your health and ammunition for all the guns you're carrying. The gift shop 1 has a limited supply of things to get, but you can upgrade it through the base building screen to a gift shop 2 – that's where the truly cool weapons of mass destruction fall into the wrong hands … your hands. You need a gift shop 2 in order to upgrade your pub to a party house.

Command Center

The command center requires more Smarties to build than most other projects, and is available once you have a workshop. This structure is essentially a shell that your Smarties will build around your base building platform. Protection provided by the command center building can be extremely useful, especially in multiplayer games where the structure houses not only your base build-

ing platform, but your flag-holding Smartie as well. The command center is one of the many structures that you need to have in your base in order to get a party house.

Once you have a Party House, you can control the turrets that you place via the command center. Just enter the command center and step on the pad labeled "Turret Control" – an overhead view of the island will appear. Left-click on any of your turrets to assume control of it; hit the Escape key to return to normal control of your Mecc character.

Party House

Once you've acquired a generator, a command center, and a level 2 gift shop, and surrounded your base with stone walls on all four sides, you'll have the option to upgrade your pub to a party house. The party house is a little sliver of Smartie heaven – it keeps the little buggers happy enough to be downright inspired. Inspiration, of course, leads to more cool stuff for you. You can enter the party house and put a Smartie to work on special projects, simply by clicking on the icons at the top of the screen and dragging it over an idle Smartie. This will return you to the outside of the party house, carrying the selected Smartie on your back. All you need to do now is go to the desired destination and give your lil' buddy the order to build (using the X key). Once your Smartie is done building, you'll probably want to take him back to your party house. If you get killed, your Smartie will wander around the landscape, available to any team.

Features available through the Mecc party house are:

Tower

This is a simple tower – giving you a high vantage point for better range of sight and defensive capability. Towers can even be built while flying, placing the structure high in the air. You can build up to 3 towers.

Mini-Shop

The mini-shop is similar to the normal gift shop in your base, but you can place it anywhere in the field. Unfortunately, the mini-shop only holds a limited selection of weapons and items, and has a limited supply of health. You can build numerous mini-shops.

Gyrocopter Pad

The gyrocopter pad is a hovering structure with bay doors on the roof along with a circular yellow "button". When you stand on the button, the bay doors will open and a brand new gyrocopter will be delivered up to you. You can only build one gyrocopter pad. For more information on the gyrocopter itself, see page 39.

Mine Shaft

Place the mine shaft anywhere in the field, and your Smartie will construct a small tree-like hut at that location. Place another mine shaft, and you'll have an underground link between any two points in the game world. Whenever you enter either of the huts, you'll immediately be transported to the other – very useful if you want to make a quick path from your base to the thick of the action. Of course, if you're on the opposing team, you can't enter another team's mine shaft, but you can destroy it.

Bulldog Turret

This turret is similar to the deployable machine-gun turret pack, only bigger and more powerful. It will fire a heavy caliber machine gun at ground enemies when they come within range.

SAM Turret

Everybody's favorite personal home defense system, the SAM turret scans a limited area for airborne enemies, firing guided missiles to run 'em down and blow 'em up.

SEA REAPER WEAPONS AND SPELLS

Where the Meccs rely upon science and technology to lend them superior firepower, the Sea Reapers' strength lies in their mystical energy. While you're playing Delphi, you'll use this energy to form her weapons, cast devastating elemental spells, even create a well-fortified base. Delphi can carry 3 special bows in addition to her default sword and regular bow. She can also "store" up to 5 spells, with 3 uses each.

DELPHI WEAPONS

Sword (default)

Graceful and deadly at the same time, Delphi can perform simple slashing moves with her sword. Striking a single enemy with a sequence of cuts, Delphi will perform combination moves that are truly deadly. Many opponents have ranged armaments, making it dangerous for Delphi to close the distance to sword-swinging range. In conjunction with her turbo ability, however, Delphi can zoom in right next to an opponent, cut him from groin to throat, and be away before the poor sap knows how he died.

Bow (default)

This bow is Delphi's equivalent of the Mecc handgun. Shots with this bow are fast, but not powerful. Fortunately, due to the bow's mystical nature, it has unlimited ammo.

Lightning Bow

The lightning bow is a more powerful version of the regular bow, with a faster shot speed – this makes it an ideal sniper weapon.

Hellfire Bow

This bow fires explosive arrows – very nasty.

Screamer Bow

The screamer bow fires a screaming skull that will home in on a target once you've locked on. Simply hold down the fire button and a lock-on bracket will appear around the target. When you release the button, the skull will seek out the target and explode on impact. Very convenient for fast or flying opponents.

Power-Up Bow

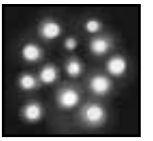
The ideal weapon for facing numerous enemies simultaneously. While wielding the power-up bow in combat, hold down the fire button, similar to the lightning bow. As you hold the button down, glowing halos will appear around targets in an ever-increasing area in front of you. When you release the fire button, the power-up bow will fire multiple projectiles, one at each of the selected targets. As if all of that wasn't enough, these projectiles will explode on impact.

DELPHI SPELLS

Smartie Grab/Bubble Spell

This spell allows you to magically ensnare a Smartie from a distance. When cast on a targeted Smartie (within a certain range), a bubble will form around the creature, carrying him back to you. This spell can be very helpful in multiplayer, allowing you to steal Smarties off of the backs of Mecc opponents or off the horns of Kabuto.

Cluster



When Delphi casts this spell, she will hurl a fist-sized object at the targeted spot. Upon impact, the object will burst, throwing small explosives out in a circle, doing damage to anything in its radius.

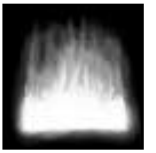
Cloak

Casting this spell turns Delphi into a fast-moving trail of green mist for a short amount of time. While in this mist form, Delphi is not only invincible, she will poison any creature she touches.

Teleport

This spell teleports Delphi to a random location within a certain distance. At the same time, casting this spell will create a few stationary Delphi clones to confuse the enemy. These clones will disappear over time, or as soon as they are hit.

Summon Firewall



Casting this spell creates a wall of fire at the targeted point. This wall will immediately sweep forward, away from Delphi, a short distance, setting fire to any creature in its path. Note that, if you are on fire, you can quickly put yourself out by jumping in the water.

Summon Hail

When you cast this spell, you'll get a top-down view of the targeted spot. When this view appears, you have a certain amount of time to target spots on the ground with the left mouse button. When regular game play resumes, giant pieces of hail will stream down from the sky to strike each of the points you targeted, doing massive damage to any creature in the area of impact.

Slow Time

When Delphi casts this spell, she will create a dome of slow time with a fixed radius, centered on the targeting cursor. Creatures caught within this dome can still move and attack, but at a much slower rate – it's very easy to avoid their attacks and pick them off one by one. Note that Delphi can enter the dome without being affected by the time distortion magic. The slow time dome has a limited duration. After it disappears, any creature who was caught within will return to its normal movement speed.

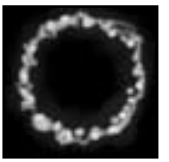
Shrink

This spell will damage any target creature while shrinking it to half of its original size – simply target the creature and cast away. The psychological effect on male opponents alone is quite devastating.

Follow

When Delphi casts this spell, two projectiles will home in on the targeted creature. Upon impact, these projectiles will lift the creature in the air and hold him there. A third projectile will then appear, homing in and exploding when it hits the struggling victim.

Summon Fire Circle



When you cast this spell, a cone of fire will appear at the point you're targeting. This cone is essentially a trigger point. You must walk to the cone in order to trigger the fire circle – at this point, a circular wall of flame will expand outward from the cone. The flames won't hurt you, but they'll burn anything they touch. Creating a fire circle isn't all that simple, though. Your enemies can shoot the cone to trigger the fire circle prematurely – if the flames hit you in this case, you will take damage. Furthermore, the fire cone won't last forever. After a short amount of time, it will disappear, and the power of the fire circle will disperse.

Repair

Delphi can use this spell to repair damaged structures in her base. Simply target the structure that's battered or broken and activate the spell to perform repairs.

Cluster Mine

This spell is similar to the Cluster spell above, but instead of launching a projectile outward, Delphi will leave a mystical object on the ground where the spell is cast. This object, when an enemy comes near it, will explode, hurling smaller explosives a short distance around, damaging any creature in the area.

Summon Tornado

Powerful and incredibly fun, this spell creates a monstrous tornado at the targeted point. Any small creature who goes near this tornado (with the exception of yourself) will immediately get yanked up into the air, whirling frantically around the tornado's circumference. Large creatures will remain grounded, but will take damage so long as they remain near the tornado – high speed winds plus tiny particles of debris equals innumerable bullet-like projectiles whirling through the air. Now, the unfortunates that have achieved lift-off will also take some damage as they continue to rise. But wait … there's more! After a short period of time, the tornado will disperse, dropping any airborne creatures from a phenomenal height, to collide messily with the ground below.

DELPHI REAPER SKI

Some special game levels will give Delphi access to a one-person jet ski vehicle, while in base building levels, she can acquire a Reaper Ski once she has a party house. The Reaper Ski is the preferred mode of travel over the water. Due to its magical nature, the Reaper Ski can even run on land, though moving much more slowly than in water.

The Reaper Ski can be augmented with power-ups like turbo boosts and missiles (which are conveniently found floating on the water surface). Acquired power-ups will be shown on the bottom of the interface. Like the Mecc gyrocopter, so long as Delphi is on a Reaper

Ski, the health indicator refers to the vehicle.

SEA REAPER BASE

The Sea Reaper base is very similar to the Meccaryn base, with the main exception that many of the structures and devices are magical in origin rather than technological. As with the Meccs, you want to return Smarties to your base in order to begin construction. When you encounter an unaligned Smartie, you'll encase him or her in a mystical bubble, which will float along behind you until you get back to your base.

When building a Sea Reaper base, you begin with a "pit" – this little device will bend the Smarties you return here to your will, allowing them to work for you. Near the pit, you'll see a "soul drop-off" point as well as a "Smartie drop-off" point nearby. Bring the collected souls of slain Vimps to the pit to provide it with energy. Without energy, your pit won't work its mystical mojo on your Smarties, and your Smarties won't work for you. Once you've returned your first Smartie to your base, you'll get the following:

Persuader

The first structure that you'll get is a persuader, built directly over your pit. This gives you a focal point for your magical energies, and it gives your Smarties a place to gather while waiting for more work. The Vimp soul energy that you collect will be harnessed here, to rejuvenate tired Smarties and keep them in your service.

Build Base Platform

As with the Mecc base, Delphi uses a build base platform in order to direct her Smarties to work. Your first Smartie will build this platform immediately after building a persuader. Stand on this platform and the camera will zoom out to an overhead view of your base – this is the base building screen. For a complete rundown of options on the base building screen, see page 58. Whenever you need to access this screen, hop on the build base platform.

From this point on, you'll need to use the base building platform to acquire additional structures.

Spell School/Shield Generator

Once you have a few Smarties drawing energy from your command center, you'll be able to build a spell school. This structure allows you to advance your research into magical energies, which will eventually be used to give you more powers as well as make it possible to build greater structures. Once the spell school is built, you can create a force field around your base as well as a spell shop.

The shield generator is an upgraded version of the spell school. The shield generator creates an extra layer of magical defense over all of your base's structures (represented by the gray bar next to each structure in the base building view). You need to have a shield generator in order to upgrade your persuader to a party house.

Spell shop 1/Spell Shop 2

If you've built a spell school, you're all set to put in a spell shop. The spell shop is an extremely useful structure, where you can acquire new spells as well as more powerful bows. Also, whenever you visit the spell shop, you'll be healed, completely supplied with ammunition, and all of your existing spells will be fully charged. The first level spell shop has a limited stock – the upgraded spell shop has just about anything you could possibly want. You'll need to upgrade your spell shop before you can upgrade your persuader to a party house.

Force Field

Once you have a spell school, you can start surrounding your base with a force field. Using the base building screen, you'll need to place a separate force field on all four sides of your base. A force field is a very effective defense against ground enemies, though the force field can be damaged. Upgrading your force field will make it tougher. You'll need an upgraded force field on all four sides of your base before you can upgrade your persuader to a party house.

Command Center

Once you have a spell school and a sufficient number of available Smarties, you can build a command center. Like the Mecc command center, Delphi's command center is essentially a shell-like structure

surrounding her base building platform and flag-carrying Smartie (in multiplayer). You need a command center in order to get a party house.

Once you have a Party House, you can control the turrets that you place via the command center. Just enter the command center and step on the pad labeled "Turret Control" – an overhead view of the island will appear. Left-click on any of your turrets to assume control of it; hit the Escape key to return to normal control of your Mecc character.

Party House

Once you've acquired a shield generator, a level 2 spell shop, and a command center, and surrounded your base with upgraded force fields on all four sides, you'll have the option to upgrade your persuader to a party house. The Sea Reaper party house is basically the same as the Mecc party house – it's a place for Smarties to gather and chill while awaiting new tasks. You can enter the party house and put a Smartie to work on special projects by clicking on the icons at the top of the screen and dragging it over an idle Smartie. This will return you to the outside of the party house, carrying the selected Smartie in a magical bubble. Go to the location where you want the special structure and activate your Smartie using the X key. Once your Smartie is done building, you'll probably want to take him back to your party house. If you get killed, your Smartie will wander around the landscape, available to any team.

The structures available within Delphi's party house are:

Hellfire Turret

This is a basic gun turret for base defense, but Delphi can position it just about anywhere she wants. The hellfire turret will fire at any ground opponents that come within range of its sensors – the explosive projectiles that it fires usually discourage all but the most determined invaders.

Screamer SAM

This device is a stationary turret that works similar to Delphi's screamer bow – only more powerful. When an airborne target comes within range of a screamer SAM, it will activate and fire a magical projectile

at the target, tracking it through the air. When this projectile hits … ouch.

Cloaked Tower

When you give the command to build one of these towers, your harnessed Smartie will create a levitating tower. These towers are only visible to Delphi or her teammates (in a multiplayer game). Enemies must come within a certain distance in order for the tower to appear visible to them. The tower's invisibility field extends to anyone or thing on it – this includes players and turrets placed on top of the tower.

Pier

When you use your party house Smartie to create a pier, you'll have access to a Reaper Ski. Simply go to the pier and mount the Reaper Ski in order to ride it. Reaper Skis have great maneuverability on the water – not so great on land. For more information on the Reaper Ski, see page 48.

Portal

Activating this will create a magical portal, similar to the mine shafts that the Meccs use. You must create two portals in order for them to work – entering one will bring you directly to the location of the other. Like the Mecc mine shaft, other team members cannot enter your portals, and portals can be destroyed.

Mini-Spell Shop

This is a smaller version of the spell shop that you can create within your base. The main difference with a mini spell shop is that it can be placed anywhere on the map, and it only contains a limited inventory of weapons and spells.

Sea Monster

When you activate this power, you'll summon a massive sea monster from the waters surrounding the island – a small cinematic sequence will show the creature rearing its head above the waves. Once this

short cut scene is finished, a timer will begin to count down to zero. Your goal: to get to the spot you want your sea monster to target when the timer reaches zero; you want this spot to be somewhere near your enemies. When the timer hits zero, the sea monster will spew a massive fireball, arcing it across the sky to land on the spot where you're standing (anywhere on the island – distance is no matter). You should probably get away from that point as quickly as possible, as the incoming globe of burning, screaming death will most likely devastate anything near the point of impact. Once the sea monster has spent himself (ahem), he'll return to the watery depths, perhaps for a cigarette and some television.

Kabuto

One giant, angry can of whoop-ass. The big bruiser. Kabuto. His weapons are primitive, but effective, using his hands, his feet, his entire body weight. Kabuto's size and strength gives him superiority over any single creature that he might meet – hell, over any group of a dozen creatures that he might meet. On top of this, he can hatch smaller offspring to help the cause. Language skills are lacking, but who's going to tell him?

Kabuto Attacks

Kabuto normally has fairly devastating attacks. But when devastating just isn't enough, hold down the adrenaline button to charge Kabuto's attack. The longer you hold it down, the more powerful the attack is, draining more adrenaline. Of course, the amount that you can charge an attack depends upon the amount of adrenaline Kabuto has. Once you've charged the attack to your liking, you can launch either a hand or foot attack. Kabuto has three levels of adrenaline attacks for both hands and feet. More powerful attacks tend to be slower – small, fast opponents can sometimes get out of the way while you're winding up a big fat killer blow.

Adrenaline Punch

This is the first level of adrenaline hand attack. Being that Kabuto's fist is bigger than most things it'll connect with, it's hardly fair to call this a punch. The extra bit of adrenaline makes all the difference, say, when you're brawling with a house.

Two-Handed Slam

This is the second level adrenaline hand attack. Kabuto brings his hands together to form an immense mallet of knuckles and fury. When he swings his fists down on a target, any target, the chunks will fly.

Elbow Drop

This is a third level adrenaline hand attack. Ah, the pro-wrestling classic. As timeless as it is punishing, the elbow drop can crush creatures and buildings alike.

Belly Flop

This is a third level adrenaline hand attack. Kabuto leaps into the air, stretching his massive form to poise spread-eagled in the air above his target, blotting out the sun itself. Then, like your overweight uncle Carl at last year's family reunion, leaping gut-first into the pool, the bulky behemoth descends. The difference here is that Kabuto isn't hitting water – and whatever comes between him and the ground is going to quickly become a small smear.

Foot Stomp

This is the first level of adrenaline foot attack. Foot go up. Little person scream in horror. Foot go down. No more scream. Kabuto like quiet.

Jumping Stomp

This is the second level of adrenaline foot attack. See foot stomp above – multiply by two.

Butt Flop

This is a third level adrenaline foot attack. Like the body slam, but with less dignity. Kabuto goes airborne, crashing into the ground gluteus maximus first as if to say to his opponents, "Kiss my hairy monster ass!"

Cannonball

This is a third level adrenaline foot attack. Kabuto's playful side comes to the fore as he folds into a great muscular sphere and hurls himself at his foes. Oh Kabuto, you're just a big hateful kid, aren't you?

Running Kick

While running, press the left mouse button to initiate a running kick. This will direct Kabuto to give the target a World Cup style boot.

Running Grab

While running, press the right mouse button to initiate a running grab. Kabuto will slide along the ground, creating an immense plume of dust behind him, to scoop up the target.

Throwing Stuff

Kabuto can make a pretty darn nasty missile weapon out of anything that he can get his big scaly fist around. Reaper Guards especially hate it when Kabuto grabs one of them and hurls him at his best buddy – both will take serious damage (usually weighted more heavily toward the projectile) and their friendship will suffer irreparable harm. Of course, Kabuto can pitch any creature he likes at cliff walls, buildings, or far out to sea … all with fatal consequences.

Kabuto can also throw large boulders. These can often be found scattered near cliff walls, and are extremely deadly. When Kabuto throws one of these ten-ton rocks, even at the ground near a cluster of enemies, the pulverizing rock and flying stone shards equal a large explosion. In a word: Ouch. Some parts of the landscape have volcanic columns where Kabuto can find boulders that continually replenish – knock the top off of one of these columns and seismic forces will soon push another out of the soil.

Magnifying Glass

When Kabuto picks up a special gemstone, he can hold it aloft to fire a wide laser at the ground, which then narrows and grows in intensity. At this point, Kabuto can control the laser in 1st person mode (use mouse to move around targeting cursor and left mouse button to fire). All creatures unfortunate enough to have this beam fall upon them will slowly burn, taking damage as smoke curls out of their pores.

Kabuto's Offspring

When a full-size Kabuto eats a Smartie, he can lay an egg that will hatch into an offspring. Offspring are much smaller versions of Kabuto, but they can grow when they're fed plenty of meat. Offspring can be used to protect areas, fetch creatures for Kabuto, or simply attack and eat targeted enemies. Kabuto can only have 2 offspring under his control at any given time.

Kabuto's Weak Spot

Kabuto is a pretty tough character overall, but he can be killed if he takes a lot of punishment over a long period of time. Considering Kabuto's size and power, not many opponents will be given the opportunity or time to chip away at him. However, the Sea Reapers designed their ultimate weapon with a kill switch – literally. In the center of Kabuto's torso is a small shield. This shield will open when an opponent comes within a certain range, revealing Kabuto's weak spot. This weak spot is a very small target which, when it takes a direct hit, will put an end to Kabuto. This can be very convenient for Kabuto's enemies (provided they can get close enough to open the shield without being crushed in Kabuto's ham-fist), but very inconvenient for Kabuto.

Base Building

Certain levels in the single player game require you to build a base in order to advance, while you can choose in a multiplayer game whether or not to play in base building mode or simply start with a fully-operational base that you utilize during play. If you're used to very complex base building procedures from other real-time strategy games, forget what you know. Base building in Giants is very simple and action-oriented.

Only the Meccs and Sea Reapers can really build and maintain a base. Kabuto is more or less a walking base, consuming and using any resources he comes across. Complete descriptions of Mecc structures are given on page 39, while Sea Reaper buildings are described on page 49. The following sections apply to more of the basic strategy of base building, applicable to both Meccs and Sea Reapers.

Building Your Base

Building a base is a matter of development, literally from the ground up. You start with nothing and gradually use Smarties and Vimps as resources in order to build some rudimentary structures. Gathering more and more resources, then using the base building screen to allocate these resources (see page 60), you can add structures to your base and improve upon them. Ultimately, the better your base is, the more powerful items and abilities you'll have access to.

Gathering Resources

For all three characters, the basic resources to gather are Smarties (the little dudes in the orange robes) and Vimps (the not-so-bright pinkish herd animals). For a complete description of Vimps and Smarties, see the character section on page 13. Each of the three characters acquire and use these resources differently …

Meccs and Resources

The Meccaryn base is more conventional, requiring you to gather workers (Smarties) and feed them in order to create better buildings and weapons. To grab a Smartie, all you need to do is walk up to one

(who isn't already working for another player) and he'll climb on your back. When you return the Smartie to your base, he'll get off and go to work for you. You can only carry one Smartie at a time.

When you're playing the Meccs, you need to kill Vimps and collect their meat in order to feed the Smarties working at their base. Dead Vimps will yield a number of meat chunks depending upon the Vimp's maturity and size. These meat chunks will melt into the ground after a few seconds, so gather them quickly, then return the meat to your food pit within your base.

Sea Reapers and Resources

The Sea Reaper base is founded on mystical power. Like the Meccs, Sea Reapers also use Smarties to establish and construct their base. Sea Reapers can capture Smarties simply by walking up to them – this will surround the Smartie in a magical bubble which will follow the Reaper around until she returns to her base. The "Smartie Grab" spell will also perform this function, except it allows you to enclose distant Smarties in the same magical bubble. You can only "carry" one Smartie at a time.

Sea Reapers must kill Vimps and gather their souls in order to acquire more energy for base building. Dead Vimps leave behind a ghostly soul, which will disperse after a short period of time. Gather up these souls and return them to your base for additional spiritual energy.

Kabuto and Resources

Kabuto doesn't really have a structural base – if anything, the entire island is his base. Resources such as Smarties and Vimps are applied directly to Kabuto's health and abilities, as well as those of his offspring. By eating Smarties, Kabuto can increase in size … and with an increase in size comes more raw physical power. In addition, once Kabuto is full size, he can eat Smarties in order to lay offspring eggs. When he does so, he'll have control of a miniature version of himself, which can attack and eat other creatures as well as fetch fresh meat to lay at Kabuto's feet.

Kabuto must eat creatures in order to regain lost health. He can also

store live creatures by skewering them on his horns, saving the juicy morsels for later. Kabuto can also direct his offspring to eat Vimps (making the offspring grow) or fetch Vimps for him (the offspring will grab the targeted Vimp and return it to Kabuto).

Protecting Your Base

Building walls can protect your buildings from Reaper Guards in the single player game, as well as from direct Kabuto/Reaper/Mecc attacks. The walls do take damage but your Smarties can repair the wall so long as they're well-fed. Upgraded walls are obviously tougher, and can take more punishment. However, because Reapers, Meccs, and Kabuto can pretty much traverse any sort of landscape, walls alone won't keep these folks out of your base. Mecc and Reaper turrets can provide additional discouragement for the pesky airborne visitor.

THE BASE BUILDING SCREEN

Once you have acquired your first Smartie, you'll have access to a "Base Build" platform within your base. Step on this platform to bring up the base building screen.

The base building screen shows you an overhead view of your base. The image above shows a Mecc base, but the same basic mechanics apply to the Sea Reaper base (Kabuto does not require a base building screen). You can change the camera view by zooming in or out (arrow

up, arrow down), or rotating to the left or right (arrow left, arrow right). You can exit the base building screen by hitting the ESC key. The mouse controls a pointer – you can move this around and select different options on the base building screen.

Each building displayed on the base building screen has a meter for its "health" – this is the vertical green bar next to the structure. Note: you can fix damaged buildings using the repair tool available in the Gift Shop.

The pub has a horizontal bar over it as well as a health bar; this horizontal bar represents the amount of meat that the pub holds. Smarties eat meat after work, so you need to keep your pub stocked with meat if you want your Smarties to be happy. When a Smartie has eaten enough Vimp meat, he'll go to the bar tables behind the pub for a quick pint, awaiting any orders you might have for him. If your Smarties don't have enough meat, they may wander off.

Smarties have a small horizontal green bar next to them – this represents their health. Damaged Smarties can regain lost health by hanging out at the pub eating more or just partying away in the Party House.

The interface panel along the right side of the screen holds the structures available for construction in your base. There are several open slots on this panel – a few main slots and four smaller ones. The main slots are for your major structures and their upgrades. The smaller slots are for wall sections and their upgrades. Once a structure is built, the slot it once occupied will either be replaced with an icon for upgrading the building, or the slot will be greyed out (if no upgrade is available).

The window at the bottom of the base building screen is the currently selected building. The name of the building is at the top of the window, along with its construction status (ready to build, complete, etc.).

Below the name, a numeric value tells you how many Smarties you need in order to build the structure. A graphic of the structure to be built is shown in the center of the window. Below the graphic, you'll

see a progress bar for the construction of the structure.

At the bottom of the window, the number of Smarties currently working on the selected structure will be displayed.

In the lower right hand corner of the base building screen, you'll see large plus (+) and minus (–) buttons. Above these buttons, there is an indicator telling you how many of your Smarties are working out of your base's total Smartie population (the rest, of course, are boozing away in your Pub or Party House). You can use the plus and minus buttons to add or remove Smarties to the construction of your currently selected structure. Once you've added enough Smarties to a building's construction, the green "Go!" will flash, and you can watch your Smarties go to work.

Building a Mecc Base Walkthrough

In order to get a better handle on building a base, here's a simple walkthrough for Mecc base building (the Sea Reaper base is very similar). You can perform this walkthrough quite easily by starting a new multiplayer game with the setting "start with no base" – you'll also need to set the Meccs as your player type.

1. Getting Started

Start with a food pit, a "Return Smartie" platform, and a "Meat Dropoff" platform (in front of the food pit). Go find a Smartie – as soon as you stand near him, he'll climb on your back. Don't worry, Smarties are relatively clean. Bring the Smartie back to your base and touch or fly over the "Return Smartie" platform. The Smartie will then drop from your back. The first thing he'll do is automatically upgrade your food pit into a pub, then he'll build a "Base Build" platform for you to work with. Go get another Smartie and return him to your base. Fly up to the Base Build platform and stand on the "Base Build" circle – the camera will zoom out to base building mode.

2. The Base Building Screen

Now you're in the base building screen (see page 60 for a complete rundown on the base building screen options). Select the "Workshop" icon in the upper right hand corner of your base building screen. Once selected, you'll see the workshop displayed in the bottom window of the interface as well as on the field within your base, flashing translucent. Note that all buildings are placed in predetermined locales – you don't have to maneuver or position your structures.

Click on the plus sign in the bottom right hand corner of the interface – do it twice to put the required number of Smarties (2) onto the construction of the workshop. When the word "Go!" starts flashing, production has begun. Watch those freaky little bastards work (the building's construction progress will be displayed in the window at the bottom of the screen).

When the building is complete, the window at the bottom of the screen will tell you. Notice that your tired Smarties will then return to the pub and eat some meat, bringing your pub's meat level down a bit. Notice also that you now have a few new icons on the right hand side of the screen. Where there was once a workshop icon, there is now a "Generator" icon (this is the upgrade for the workshop). Also, the slot beneath it now shows the icon "Gift Shop 1."

3. Retrieving Vimp Meat

Before you get your Smarties seriously working, you should go find some Vimp meat to make sure that they stay happy. So what are you waiting for? Get out there and massacre some defenseless Vimps!
When you kill a Vimp, it will break apart into large chunks of meat. More mature Vimps are larger and will yield more meat, while young Vimps yield less meat. Pick up all the meat you can – you can only hold 20 slabs of meat at a time. Vimp meat will disappear if left too long. Oh, and don't worry about killing too many Vimps – the natural forces of the Island ensure that there are always plenty of Vimps for you to slaughter.

Bring the meat you've gathered back to the food pit – stand on the "Meat Dropoff" platform to drop the meat into the pit. You can only

put in as much meat as your food pit can hold – the remainder stays in your possession.

4. Protecting Your Base

Select the "Generator" icon and assign 2 or more Smarties to go upgrade your workshop. Note that if you want the building to go faster, you can assign more Smarties to the job (assuming you have acquired them inside your base).

Once your generator is built, you'll notice that your buildings have gray vertical bars next to them in addition to their health bar. These bars represent shield energy, provided by the generator. Building shields are additional health for every building, which will slowly regenerate if damaged. Once a building's shield has been completely destroyed, any additional damage will drain its health.

Through the base building screen, assign Smarties to build a command center. This will basically place a shell-like structure around your base building platform for protection. And like they tell you in school, always use protection.

Notice that your base is surrounded by a natural rock wall, with 4 large gaps. The 4 gaps correspond to the 4 slots on the right-hand side of the base building interface meant for wall building. Start assigning Smarties to build walls in each of these slots. You'll start with wood walls, but you can upgrade to stone walls, which are far stronger.

5. Getting Cool Stuff

Head into your gift shop to get new weapons and items. You can only carry 1 backpack at a time, 3 items, and 3 weapons (not including your pistol). If you run out of ammunition for any of your weapons, you're ammo stock will be replenished just by entering the gift shop.

You can upgrade your gift shop from "Gift Shop 1" to "Gift Shop 2" at any time, so long as you have 2 available Smartie workers who are happy and well fed. Go to the base building screen to upgrade your gift shop.

Now when you enter your gift shop, you'll see a lot of new stuff.

6. Advancing Your Base

Once you have a generator, a level 2 gift shop, and stone walls on all four sides of your base, go to the base building screen to upgrade your pub to a party house.

When you enter your party house, you'll see a number of Smarties lounging about and drinking beer. There are 6 icons across the top of the screen, corresponding to different objects you can order the Smarties to make for you, including gun turrets, towers, and best of all, the gyrocopter pad – for more information on these devices, see page 42.

Now it's up to you to develop your base as you see fit – you can surround it with gun turrets, or add a gyrocopter pad, or place towers inside it … or you can do all of these things. The remainder of base building is strategic deployment – something you can only learn when playing against an opponent. Time to get into a multiplayer skirmish with your friends (or complete strangers) and kick some ass!

Multiplayer

Multiplayer games allow you to play against friends (or enemies) via modem or internet connection. Different game types require different setups, but the basic idea is that you can play any of the 3 characters from the single player game – Meccs, Sea Reapers, Kabuto. Note that the abilities of these characters are somewhat imbalanced. The ideal 3-way multiplayer game would pit 5 Meccs against 3 Sea Reapers against 1 Kabuto – but this dynamic isn't enforced, so feel free to make your own rules.

Host a New Multiplayer Game

When you choose to host a new multiplayer game, the following menu allows you to arrange game options and teams.

Game Statistics

Teams: Teams currently active in the game
Count: Number of players on each team
Score: Score for each team
Deaths: Number of deaths for each team

Current Players

Name: Name of player
Status: Current status of game
Ping: Gives the ping of each player (lower ping = faster connection)
Score: Gives the score of each player
Race/Team Color: Race of player or team color (if playing Mecc vs. Mecc or Reaper vs. Reaper)

Chat Window

Left-click on the chat window to type a message to other players. Hit return at the end of the message to send.

Game Settings

Game Name: Name of selected game

Game Type: Deathmatch, Deathmatch with full base, Capture the Smartie, Capture the Smartie with full base, Base Building, Capture the Smartie base building (see explanations below)

Teams: Mecc vs. Mecc, Mecc vs. Reaper, Reaper vs. Reaper, or Mecc vs. Reaper vs. Kabuto

World: Selected game map (note that game maps are specific to the types of teams playing – the map you select must work for the teams you've chosen)

Game Options

Max Players: Select the number of players in the game – up to 10 players are supported to play in a single game simultaneously (although the maximum number of players will ultimately be determined by the speed of your computer as well as your internet connection)

Join Any Time: Set this option (y/n) to allow or restrict new players from a game once it has started (note that base building games will not allow new players to enter once the game has started, and join any time games will not let you destroy buildings)

Allow Team Changes: Set this option (y/n) to allow players to change teams after the game has started

Damage Teammates: Set this option (y/n) to determine whether or not teammates are damaged by friendly fire

Points per Kill: Set the amount of points a player gets by killing an opponent (up to 20)

Points per Capture: Set the amount of points a player gets by capturing the opposing team's flag-waving Smartie (up to 1000)

Prevent Capture Time: Enables unimpeded base building by rendering flag-waving Smarties immune to capture for a set amount of time (up to 30 minutes)

Number of Smarties: Determines the constant number of Smarties that will be present on the game island.

Vimp Meat/Souls: This setting (easy/medium/hard) affects the amount of meat you need to fill your pit. For instance, on the easy setting, you'll need less meat, and it will be easier to feed your Smartie workers. On the hard setting, you'll need more meat in order to keep your workers happy. The same modifiers apply to Vimp souls that Sea Reapers gather.

Winning Conditions

Time Limit: Set a time limit for the game (up to 2 hours)

Add Time to Clock: This option allows you to adjust the game's time limit while the game is running

Player Score Limit: Set a score limit for individual players (up to 500)

Team Score Limit: Set a team score limit (up to 5000)

First Base Complete: Set this option (y/n) to end the game when one team completely builds their base

End Game Now: Select this option to immediately end a currently running game

Load Map/Start Game

Click on the "Load Map" button to load the map into memory. Once the map is loaded, you can click on the "Start Game" button to begin playing.

Restore Defaults

Click on this button to restore the default settings for all multiplayer options.

Quit

Click on this button to quit the menu and game.

Join an Existing Multiplayer Game

You can choose to join an existing multiplayer game that another player has already set up. Doing this will take you to a screen where you can enter the IP address of the game you're planning to join, or browse the internet for an existing game – if you're hooked up to a game service like Mplayer or GameSpy, you'll get linked to their system.

Once you're linked to an existing game, you'll come to the same screen described above in the host section. Players joining a multiplayer game only have access to certain functions – they can't modify the game options or win conditions, but they can choose teams, chat with other players (pre-game trash talking is strongly encouraged), and view the options selected by the host before the game begins.

Multiplayer Game Types

Deathmatch

Players can join any of the teams set by the host, and then … well the name "deathmatch" is pretty self-explanatory, isn't it? Deathmatch games can be played with no base to start or with a full base at starting time.

Capture the Smartie

Similar to capture the flag games, each team starts with a pre-built base and a Smartie, blissfully waving a flag in the center of the base as if to say, "Please capture me!" The idea is to get inside the other team's base and do just that – steal the opposing Smartie and return it to your base. Of course, while you're doing that, the opposing team will not only be attempting to stop you, but also to steal your Smartie from your base. Like deathmatch, you can determine whether you want to start with no base or with a full base. You can also opt to play capture the Smartie with base building as well – double the objectives, ten times the challenge.

Base Building

For a base building game, each team starts with no base and a dream – to build a powerful tactical position that overwhelms all others. The main challenge in base building (aside from the obvious – combat) is getting resources. The island has a fixed amount of Smarties and Vimps, and all teams will need them to build a base.

Hints & Tips

Single Player

Giants is an action game, so never be afraid to go in blasting. Even if the result isn't favorable, you'll always have the opportunity to replay the mission.

The in-game music will signal when danger is near – listen closely and you'll receive a fair amount of warning before things get too ugly.

When you go up against Reaper armies during base building missions, start setting up defenses early. And keep an eye on your immediate surroundings just in case they're planning on attacking the rear of your base!

Meccs

Careful when using your jetpack for long-distance flying. You don't want to overshoot a cliff and land in the water (fatal for a Mecc), nor do you want to end up high above the ground with no fuel to ensure a safe landing – if you take a hard fall from a great height, you'll feel the burn.

Sea Reapers

Once you acquire the turbo ability, you can zip across the landscape rather quickly and easily.

Kabuto

Remember: The biggest creature has the right of way.

Multiplayer

Because there is a fixed amount of Smarties and Vimps on the island at any given time, the more resources (Smarties, Vimps) you gather, the less there will be for your opponents.

Killing your opponents' Smarties will not only deprive them of

resources, it will also spawn more unaligned Smarties, which you can capture and return to your own base.

Killing Vimps when you have no need for them can also be a good strategy – the dead Vimps can't feed your enemies.

Appendix:
The History of Planet Moon

The year was 1898, exactly 102 years ago, that the young designer, Earlydoors Graham, invented what was to become known as the World's First Videogame. Blood, sweat, and tears went into this grand invention. But the story of which I speak is a tragic one, for young Earlydoors would be left destitute, despondent, and imprisoned before his dream of a great Gaming Empire would truly be realized.

In the late 1800s Earlydoors created a glass bulb which emitted light, and could be turned on and off at will. Indeed, here was the very game itself: on and off, on and off, who's going to be the winner? ON!!! Yes, yes, you win!!! Such a revelation in the gaming field occupied Earlydoors' six sons with many hours of frenzied fun and enjoyment! But, alas, the days in these Elysian Fields would be short lived, for the invention would soon be stolen and eclipsed by another inventor, Thomas Edison, who used the "lightbulb" for the much more practical purpose of lighting areas which were dark. Of course, it all seems so obvious in retrospect, but the times were different then, and for many people, Earlydoors was ahead of his time.

It was shortly after this that the six sons decided to form the company, Planet Moon, in a tribute to their Dad, the forefather of the videogame.

The Fall

Sad and dejected from the "lightbulb" fiasco, Earlydoors turned his attention to a new quest: The Total Elimination of Many of the World's Most Tiresome Questions. Unfortunately, this endeavor also met with failure. The root of the problem existed in the first two questions he planned on eliminating. They were both to do with a newly created treasure, the now famous Golden Gate Bridge of San Francisco. The first question …

Why do they call it the Golden Gate Bridge when in reality it's red?

… was the first to be tackled. To combat this much-asked inquiry he would, indeed, paint the entire bridge gold.

One less question!

For the following question …

Is this the world's longest bridge?

… he planned to blow it up, eliminating the question along with the bridge itself – hence the nickname, Earlydoors "Paint It Gold And Blow It Up" Graham, as he spent his remaining years in jail.

Credits

Giants was created and developed by Planet Moon Studios

PLANET MOON STUDIOS IS:

Nick Bruty	Co-Art Director, President
Bob Stevenson	Co-Art Director, Vice President
Andy Astor	Programming Director, CFO
Tim Williams	Creative Director
Shawn Nelson	The Animator
Scott Guest	Principal Software Engineer
Jim Mazrimas	Senior Programmer
Dave Aufderheide	Senior Programmer
Ken Capelli	Senior Artist

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Nick Bruty, Bob Stevenson, and Tim Williams

Programming by:
Andy Astor
Scott Guest
Jim Mazrimas
Dave Aufderheide

Art by:
Bob Stevenson & Nick Bruty
Ken Capelli

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Hannah and her home baked cookies
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Liam Byrne

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